30 October 1969

Dear Harold,

I was sorry too that we had so little time to talk and that I was partly distracted by the plight of my unfortunate friend. She has since endured further emotional upheaval and distress, including a suicide hoax by this deranged and evil husband. (Needless to say, this is strictly confidential.) However, she is going ahead with the divorce, according to her latest bulletins.

You were quite right, of course, about my letter to the NY Times: I got the usual form letter of "regrets." If the Times was a newspaper worthy of the name, the contents of my letter would have been a page one story, instead of being excluded even from the obscurity of "Letters."

By the way, I ran across an intriguing and utterly new piece of information (new to me, anyhow) in the book "An American Melodrama" by three British journalists who covered the 1968 presidential campaign. Two of the authors were in the hotel when RFK was shot and got to the pantry within minutes, where they saw written on the wall the words "The once and future King." They say in the book that this has not been explained to this day. Did you ever hear of this writing on the wall? What do you make of it? The authors also say, in a passage on presidential assassins mentioning Oswald, "if indeed he did assassinate JFK" (or words to that effect).

I had rather a disappointment yesterday, which will disappoint you also, I think. I discovered that one of the extra verbatim reporters hired as a temporary because of the General Assembly workload was a court reporter at the Shaw trial. I was excited at the thought that he might be able to help us get more transcripts ofthe testimony and arranged to meet him during the lunch interval.

Well, he was most unhelpful: he did not have any transcripts, only his shorthand notes, did not know where I could get them except from the Dietrich court reporting firm in New Orleans, and as to price, he shrugged and said 50¢ a page or a dollar a page depending on how they feel at the moment.

This character was a thousand percent for Garrison, even while acknowledging that Shaw was innocent and should never have been charged and that some of the evidence or witnesses presented by Garrison were mortifying (Spiesel, for example). He pronounced quite loftily, as if his authority and expertise were well beyond question, that Garrison was completely correct except for the detail that it was really Banister who should have been in the dock instead of Shaw. Oswald, he told me, was of course guilty, fired some of the shoxts, how could anyone doubt that, didn't he carry the rifle into the building and wasn't he at the 6th floor window? All this said with patronizing and almost pitying self-satisfaction and sorrow for my ignorance and folly. To give you an idea of this guy's knowledge of the case and his general intelligence, he told me in the same tone of finality and omniscience that Ruby was selected to execute Oswald because he (Ruby) had only six months to live anyhow, was the victim of cancer. When I pointed out that Ruby had lived for more than three years with this supposed cancer without manifesting any symptoms, he said that this was not at all unusual, happened to many people. Withoutx surgery, I asked? Well, said he, he might have been getting radiation treatment. Thatis only one sample, and there were worse ones. This guy is an Englishman who has resettled in Fort Worth and travels around on free-lance assignments. I was strongly tempted to ask him where he was on 11/22/63, but decided that he assassinates logic and fact, not people, being basically well-intentioned, I suppose.

All the best,

Sylvia